

### REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 13, 14 and 16 are presented for consideration. Claim 13 is the sole independent claim. Claim 17 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 13 has been amended to clarify features of the subject invention. Support for these changes can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicants note with appreciation that claim 17 has been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. To expedite allowance of this application, the subject matter of claim 17 has been substantively incorporated in independent claim 13. Applicants submit, therefore, that independent claim 13, and claims 14 and 16 depending therefrom, should be deemed allowable at the outset. Such favorable indication is requested.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 13 and 14 (and, presumably, claim 16) were rejected 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent application publication number 2001/0036581 to Inao et al.

Applicants submit that this document does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited in claims 13, 14, and 16. Therefore, this rejection is respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, as discussed above, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended independent claim 13 to substantively include the features of dependent claim 17.

Applicants submit that this change renders independent claim 13, as well as claims 14 and 16 depending therefrom, allowable.

Applicants further submit that all pending claims, namely, claims 13, 14 and 16, being allowable, the instant application is in condition for allowance. Such favorable indication is requested.

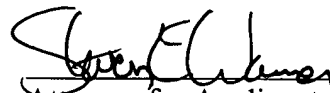
Still further, Applicants submit that this Amendment After Final Rejection clearly places this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants believed that the prior Amendment placed the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the instant Amendment, as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 CFR 1.116.

Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are also requested.

Applicants also request that the Examiner contact their undersigned representative should any matters be deemed outstanding precluding allowance of this application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010 All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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